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SIGNAL

The publication for
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users and developers.

THIS ISSUE'S CIRCULATION: 6,301

#19

20 December 1984

Seven Odds And Ends For Lisa Users

1. Our experiments with input/output to the serial port driver in the 2.0 Workshop indicate that programmers should buffer their data and do READ_DATA and WRITE_DATA calls with chunks of at least 50 bytes at a time. That was the only way we could reach an apparent maximum throughput of about 700 bytes per second.

2. John Dubois of Aurora, Illinois, told us

about a 7/7 trick mentioned on page 149 of the new Office System manual, but unknown to most Lisa users: if stationery pads are dragged out of a window and left on the desktop, the pads will then appear in the Desk menu. Choosing a pad from the Desk menu will tear off a new document *and* open it with a single click of the mouse!

3. We continue to receive a surprising number of calls from people who can't seem to link the font program we featured in *Signal* #13. Look through your file directory and find the demonstration Quickdraw "make" files that have "/M/" in their name, like QD/M/BOXES

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and QD/M/SAMPLE. Use those examples as templates for creating your own exec files for linking programs.

4. Notice how the disk window is labeled "Backed up: never" after a full restore from floppies? That forces the next attempted backup to be full, not incremental. A better design would have been to set the last backup date equal to the last date on the floppies the disk was just restored from, to allow incremental backups to continue.

5. Our belated thanks to Gene Pope of Aurora, Colorado, who long ago told us the way to disable the debugger so that it can't be entered when the numeric pad's minus key is pressed on a Lisa with the Workshop installed: rename the SYSTEM.DEBUG and SYSTEM.DEBUG2 files to something harmless like SYS.D and SYS.D2, and then reboot. Disabling the debugger also allows the Environments window to be reached directly from power-up, a problem we originally discussed last year in *Signal* #6.

6. Don't forget that the Wastebasket retains the last document thrown away for *each* disk, not just the last document trashed. That can make users believe they've successfully removed all traces of a document on a floppy, even though it's really still in the trash. For example, imagine moving a document from a diskette's window into the Wastebasket, followed by moving a document from the Profile's window into the Wastebasket. Many users mistakenly believe the hard disk document flushes the floppy document out of the trash, and they eject the diskette thinking that all traces of the floppy document have been destroyed. But opening the Wastebasket will reveal that *both* documents are still in the trash. If you're working with confidential files, watch out for unflushed trash when you give your next floppy to a co-worker.

7. A letter from Bill Quirk of Mr. Computer, a dealer in Emporia, Kansas, revealed an interesting source of technical information for Lisa users. Apparently dealers have access to special Apple electronic bulletin boards which

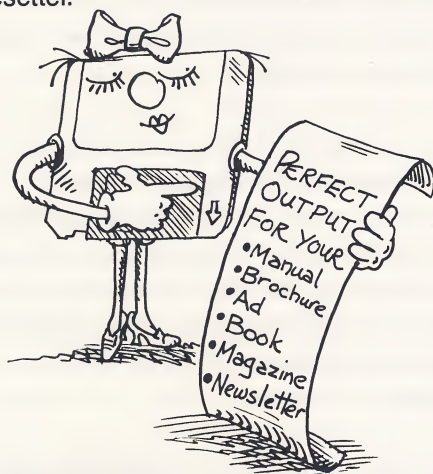
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document known problems, including software bugs, in Apple's various product lines. Have *you* asked your dealer for a copy of Apple's latest bug lists? ☐

Club Notices And Newsletters

We like the layout, graphics, and content of the new, square-page issues of *San Diego Mac News*, the monthly newsletter of the San Diego Macintosh User Group. Write to Box 81444, San Diego, CA 92138, for more information.

A recently formed organization is the Eugene Macintosh/Lisa User's Group, Box 10988, Eugene, OR 97440.

Max Dommartin is trying to organize a Lisa club in the Los Angeles area. Write to 854

N. Croft Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90069, or call 213-852-4994.

FatBits is the newsletter of the Conejo Valley Macintosh Users' Group, available from Box 7118, Thousand Oaks, CA 91359.

November brought us the first newsletter of the Ventura County Macintosh Club, which can be reached at 1413-D S. Victoria Ave., Ventura, CA 93003.

NO MUG (their logo is a steaming coffee mug centered in the international barred circle "no" sign) is the New Orleans Macintosh Users' Group. Write to 3301 W. Esplanade #16259C, Metairie, LA 70002.

We recently received the first edition of *Professor Override's Almanac*, a publication of the national Lisa ToolKit Users' Group, 712 35th Ave., Seattle, WA 98122. ☐

Subscriber Interests And Activities

This is our fourth installment of excerpts from subscribers' correspondence. Keep those cards and letters coming!

Wayne Gibson, McMurray, PA: I am a salesman and have used LisaDraw and LisaCalc for very well-received presentations. I have used LisaProject to manage a computer conversion. I purchased the 7/7 edition of Keystroke and am salivating in anticipation of automated customer/prospect files with Clipboard access. Wow!

João B. Dias, San Jose, CA: I intend to use my Macintosh mostly for scientific word processing, programming in Modula-2 and Pascal, and terminal emulation.

Thomas P. Rielly, New Haven, CT: I am a student at Yale University. I use the Mac primarily for programming, word processing, and graphics design.

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Max Dommartin, Los Angeles, CA: I am a commercial and residential interior designer. I use the Lisa for word processing, drafting floor plans, and graphics.

David L. Henderson, Huntsville, TX: I teach computer literacy classes at Sam Houston State University, using the Mac.

Devin B. King, Fountain Valley, CA: I am using a Macintosh and a Lisa 2/10 for applications ranging from accounting to advertising.

Karl Rasmusson, Toowoomba, Australia: I am interested in obtaining Mac public domain software. For the benefit of other Mac owners here in Australia, I would upload the software to The Australian Beginning, our own equivalent of The Source. I am also keen to correspond with any Mac users in the USA who would like to write me at Box 5449, Toowoomba 4350. ☐

This Month's Mailbag

An Encyclopedia of Encyclopedia Faults

My wife, who happened to scan *Signal* #18 before me, commented "Doesn't this guy have anything else to do except complain?" I felt the same way as I read *An Encyclopedia Of Macintosh Faults*.

Mr. Funk, during all his "penetrating" time at his Mac, must think that all Mac owners worry about the same little nuances and really care about the lack of features that he identifies. I found the article overly picky and basically not in the *esprit de corps*.

I trust that future issues of *Signal* will publish more constructive articles rather than the like of Mr. Funk's, or, for that matter, this one!

Bob Sprague, Portola Valley, CA

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The *Encyclopedia Of Macintosh Faults* by Alex Funk was neither of these, and the *Editor's Notes* at the end did little to dispel the erroneous impressions that were promoted.

The article should have been titled *Misconceptions Of Macintosh Software*, as most of the encyclopedia was an opinionated criticism of assorted software-based functions, many of them inaccurate. For example, window positions are remembered by all applications. The command symbol is available on the keyboard (Manhattan font, shift-option-O). His few comments on the hardware are, for the most part, totally in error. In its present configuration, there is not enough room for a second drive within the Mac housing. The Imagewriter is, in fact, his praised Prowriter, but with enhanced graphics capability. The entire article proved that his requested idiotproofing is impossible.

In the future, please attempt to be more discriminating when choosing your articles. I had previously found *Signal* to be highly informative and helpful. Surely this was only a temporary lapse and the next issue will again be crammed with useful information.

D. Noland, Tulsa, OK

Something tells us we would have raised a lot less fur simply by choosing a more passive title, like A Macintosh Wish List. Though we certainly didn't agree with all of the article, we still think it was worth printing. The only entry we now regret including was the bit about toggles, which are already on the Mac! (We're so accustomed to toggle-less Lisas, which we use for most of our writing, that it slipped right by us.) Note that "window position" can mean the size and position on the screen of the window itself, or it can mean the position of the contents of the window. Although the Finder does a good job of remembering window positions, applications do not. MacPaint's window size and position can't be changed or moved on the screen. The contents of a MacPaint window are always repositioned to a standard starting point when a file is opened, regardless of where the file was positioned when last closed. MacWrite lets you move and resize its windows, but it forgets the settings once the program is

exited, and it always presents an initial full-screen window when started. Open a MacWrite document, scroll it, close it, then open it again. The position of the window contents won't be remembered. It's true that a number of custom fonts contain the command symbol, but users have to find and acquire those fonts on their own. The standard Macintosh and the collection of fonts shipped by Apple do not offer a way to output the command cloverleaf, one of the most important keycaps! General Computer in Boston would disagree that there's not enough room for two disks. They're currently offering upgrades that involve adding internal ten megabyte disks to existing Macs. To us, the important point about swapping printers was not which model to choose, but that there should be a way to do it. -MG

Which Package Will Fly?

I have recently purchased a Macintosh and want to use it in my work. I am the scheduler for an airline with 150 pilots. I think I need a relational database to do what I want, but am not quite sure anything can fill my needs. Enclosed is an explanation of what those needs are. I would appreciate it if you could analyze them and recommend a software package that you believe will meet the challenge. I will truly appreciate your time and effort in analyzing this information, as I am totally confused after looking at Odesta Helix, OverVue, Omnis 2, and MacProject. I am very anxious to make a decision and purchase the software before the year is out.

Rick L. Himrich, Louisville, KY

Sorry, we don't have the time or resources to do your analysis for you. However, a very brief glance at your specifications makes us think that all you really need is a good spreadsheet like Multiplan. Find a reputable programming consultant who is familiar with spreadsheets and who can provide you with glowing testimonials from satisfied customers. Give the consultant your specs and ask for a bid. A good programmer can probably generate the spreadsheet you need in about a day, at a cost your company can easily afford

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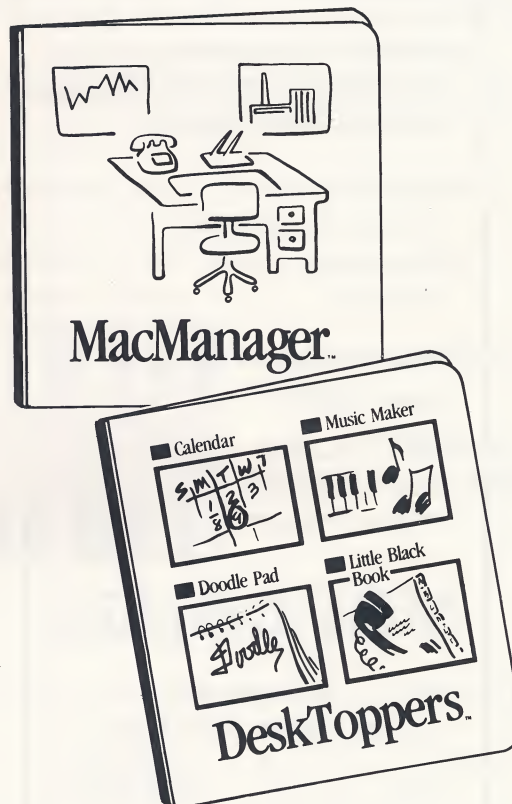
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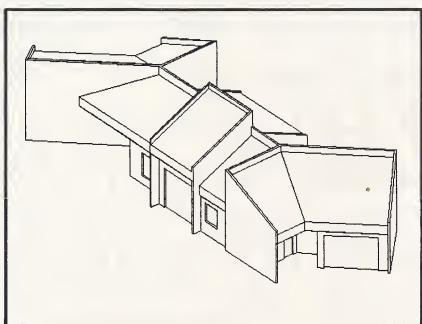
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(especially considering the tremendous return on investment that should result). And don't pay the full bill until you're sure that what's delivered is exactly what you want. -MG

A Vote For Main Street Filer

While reading the *Signal* #18 review of Habadex, I was struck with how satisfied I am with my database management program. I purchased Main Street Filer and am delighted with it. It is the only really good database program I know of that is out for the Mac.

Considering the poor reviews that publications are giving Macintosh database software, it is more than likely that many buyers will go wrong in their selection of a database package. I investigated the field pretty well before I purchased through mail order. Main Street Filer once sold for \$249 because it is a very powerful program (more so than is necessary for home use) and very easy to use. It now sells for \$125 through mail order and is cheaper than almost all of the competition. It makes use of all of the advanced Macintosh editing techniques and, unless I'm mistaken, it's the only one *not* copy protected! The only drawback is that it does not interface with other Mac programs. Of course, you can always make a MacPaint document out of the current Main Street display, but that is of limited usefulness.

Richard Bayer, Victoria, TX

Report From A MacWorks User

My office has a Lisa 2/5 and a Macintosh. The principle reason for purchasing both was the flexibility in Macintosh software and compatibility with Lisa when needed. However, attempts at finding truly compatible software have been extremely disappointing. Even programs that seem to work will often have system errors while printing. I have had difficulty in several respects using the following software with MacWorks: OverVue (the most reliable, but still a few bugs), 1stBase, Main Street Filer, PFS:File/Report (will not run), and MegaFiler. Maybe I shouldn't be disappointed, since the MacWorks introduction warns that "certain programs from Apple and third parties may not be usable".

Nicki Leighton, Corpus Christi, TX

Looking For Lisa Products

I have a large file of research papers that were previously kept in an Apple II using PFS:File. I was able to convert the Pascal files to ASCII using a program called The Bridge, and I transferred them to the Lisa via modem. I would like to obtain software to manage this database on the Lisa. Are there any products to consider, other than LisaList, Omnis, and Keystroke?

An August 1984 article in A+ promised many new software products for the Lisa. I checked into some of these. A+ stated that Wadsworth Professional Software was coming out with a Lisa version of their acclaimed Statpro package. They have no such plans. It was stated that Sorcim would be coming out with SuperCalc 3 and SuperWriter for the Lisa. The company claims that, since their takeover, they have become less ambitious and are not developing Lisa versions of those packages.

Has anyone ever compiled a list of hardware that works in the Lisa expansion slots?

Does anyone have an accurate figure for the total number of Lisas manufactured to date? Apple won't tell.

M. R. Mark, Washington, DC

You seem as informed as anyone about Lisa products. The only expansion cards we've actually seen are the original two-port parallel card for printers and extra Profiles, and the Priam card for the large disk. We've heard rumors of, but never seen, four-port serial cards, apparently intended for multi-user Lisas running Unix. We've never heard figures on Lisa shipments that could confidently be called "accurate". -MG

An Omnis Omnibus

Because of a need for a Mac database that could also mail merge, I sent for Omnis 2 from Organizational Software. I was unaware that the program was recently upgraded for the Mac, and the price increased to \$295. That is actually not out of line, considering the improvements in the new version.

I first received in the mail what was apparently an old version of Omnis with a



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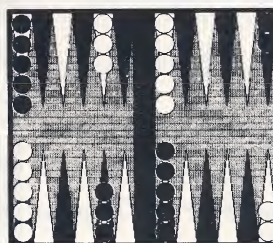


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thick manual. It made little use of the mouse and pull-down menus. I gave up trying to use it because of the crude graphics and poor documentation.

The new Omnis 2 is an excellent example of a Mac program, with pull-down menus, Mac-style editing, and a well-illustrated, thinner manual with a good index. After trying Chapter 2, a tutorial using demo data, I understood how the product worked. I tried a quick database, made some mailing labels, did a mail merge (a text editor is not needed), and felt comfortable with it. However, there is a lot more to learn, such as forms design, calculations, sorts, and so on. I have not yet needed to call their phone support service, and I have returned the registration for a second free uncopiable (ugh!) disk and a summary card.

The manual is so terse, it must be read thoroughly to understand all the program's capabilities. If inexperienced users aren't willing to put in study time, they might want to start with a simpler package.

The *Macintosh Buyer's Guide* says Omnis 2 doesn't require a second drive. Maybe not, for a very small file. The capacity of Omnis 2 is well documented in its ads, which also compare it to Omnis 3, to which the user can upgrade. Who could want more? Searches and printouts are fast. Databases are limited to a single disk, but splitting up data into two or more files on separate disks is, for me, faster and no worse than swapping a group of disks that hold one huge file.

I like Omnis better than DB Master, my previous favorite.

Sidney S. Smith, New Canaan, CT

Tying Up A Few Loose Ends

Signal #17 contains an answer from Joan Dickey in response to our mailing list request in *Signal #12*. I'd like to thank Joan and also obtain the address of Organizational Software in order to obtain Omnis 3.

I finally ordered and received Pneu-Mouse, and have just put it in service on our Lisa 2/5. So far so good.

What do you think of 1stBase's ability to handle mailing lists? I'll check further on PFS:File and Report regarding same.

We have BPI General Accounting and can't use Keystroke since it's for 7/7, and BPI has yet to come up with a 7/7 version of General Accounting.

K. Y. Fisher, Phoenix, AZ

Organizational Software is at 2655 Campus Dr. #150, San Mateo, CA 94403. We want to hear more about your Pneu-Mouse. What does it really do for you? How about some details on the pneumatic mechanism? Just like we had to with Habadex, we postponed further inspection of 1.0 1stBase because a new, improved version is now shipping. The original Keystroke was for the 2.0 environment. Maybe you can get the vendor to ship you that old version, although you'll lose the ability to do Clipboard cuts and pastes. -MG

Tecmar Font Moving Revisited

There is a way around the "insufficient memory" message you reported in *Signal #15*, when trying to use Font Mover on the Tecmar Mac Drive. You should copy Font Mover and your font files to the Tecmar boot floppy. Make all font changes using the floppy, then copy the System file from the floppy onto the Mac Drive, overwriting the hard disk's original System file.

Charles Greene, Franklin, TN

Paul Dupree of Lexington Computer in Kentucky also called us to suggest that technique. And Tom Wooded called one more time to explain that his technique described in Signal #16 really does work, as long as the font files are kept along with the Font Mover as the only icons in the hard disk window outside of the single folder. -MG

Where Is LisaPaint?

I purchased my Lisa 2/10 last August and am, in general, extremely pleased. In comparison to the early CP/M and current non-Apple products, my Lisa is an absolute, unequivocal, resounding, superbly elegant dream machine. I cannot say enough about what a pleasure it is to use a computer that completely redefines the hackneyed phrase "user friendly". What a difference a few

years makes in this industry!

But, excited as I am about my new Lisa, I am bugged by an annoying flaw. I am frustrated by the lack of an ability to trace or draw fine detail. As a graphic designer, I want to digitize my designs (such as type characters and logos) into LisaDraw files. The mouse, as good as it is for cursor movement, cannot be controlled accurately enough. A graphics tablet would probably do the job, but can one be installed on a Lisa? Is there a reasonably priced video digitizer that can be installed on a Lisa?

What ever happened to the Canon color printer that was supposed to be available? My dealer ordered mine four months ago and I'm still waiting. Apparently *vaporware* doesn't just refer to software that fails to materialize.

Al Seyle, Camarillo, CA

Note that with good zooming software (Mac's FatBits mode is a crude example), even coarse input peripherals can allow detailed work. Is the current Lisa software and display really of high enough resolution to do what you want? Some kind of bitmap-based "LisaPaint" is what's needed to receive digitized video; LisaDraw wasn't designed for manipulating objects defined as only a collection of pixels. We asked Apple about the color printer. They explained that only Canon is selling the product, which has been in stock and shipping for some time. But before Apple dealers can sell the printer, they must complete a qualification process to become authorized Canon dealers. Your shipment may have hung up waiting for your dealer to qualify. -MG

Another Brick In The Wall

Does anyone know how to change the QWERTY keyboard layout for American Lisa software into QWERTZ with ä, ö, ü and ß?

It would be quite interesting to know whether the CP/MAC interpreter advertised in *Signal* causes considerable delays, whether there are any problems, and so on.

Past issues of *Signal* have given me the impression that the Mailbag is in danger of becoming something like a wailing wall for

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unsatisfied Lisa owners. *Signal* shouldn't keep that querulous note.

Peter M. Fischer, Tübingen, West Germany

Was that a complaint about complaining? The Workshop Hardware Interface documentation describes a SetLegends procedure that provides a way of pretending to have different keycaps, without physically replacing the keyboard. Our guess is that calling the procedure from a QuickPort program would leave the keys redefined for other desktop programs. No one at Signal has ever done much with CP/M, and we certainly don't want to begin to get involved with such an old fashioned operating system now, so we'll have to be on the lookout for an outside reviewer. -MG

Which Language Is Best?

I wish to purchase Logo and am interested in knowing how ExperLogo and Mac Logo compare. Similarly, there are two BASIC implementations available, as well as two versions of Pascal. It would be helpful to me as well as to other Macintosh owners to get advice about which version to purchase.

Naomi Bolotin, Cambridge, MA

Of the products you mention, we've only looked at Mac Pascal so far, in Signal #18. Until we review others, you might want to check out a journal called MacTech that's devoted to Macintosh programming. It will undoubtedly be comparing competing language implementations. Write to Box 846, Placentia, CA 92670. -MG

More Habadex Blues

Jean Olson's Habadex woes in *Signal* #17 hit me where it hurts. I'm trying to forget I wasted \$200 on it myself.

As a newspaper editor, I need to know who to call on a wide variety of topics. And with a daily deadline, anything that saves time is a godsend. Of course, I rushed out eight months ago and bought Habadex.

Since I didn't, and still don't, have a modem, I bought it as a "package deal" along with the HabaDialer box they claimed to make. It was due to be released in two

weeks. I spent quite a bit of my spare time hurrying to type in the contents of my bulging Rolodex file. When done, I started calling my dealer every day to see if the dialer had come in. Of course, as the months wore on, I didn't call as often, especially since I had to look up the number and dial it in the traditional manual fashion. Meanwhile, Haba wrote me to recommend sending in my disk for the 1.1 update.

Here's the kicker. I love the program. I boot it up, put it through its paces, and it's just what I need. I was further amazed when the upgrade took care of almost every one of the shortcomings I saw in the original version. But since my dialer hasn't come in yet, all the program really does is make my Mac beep. I'm the proud owner of a \$200 demo disk.

It's ironic. The software is sophisticated, yet this box they seem unable to make must be pretty simple. After all, I can make my Mac dial about 30% of the time by just pressing the handset over the air vent near the speaker.

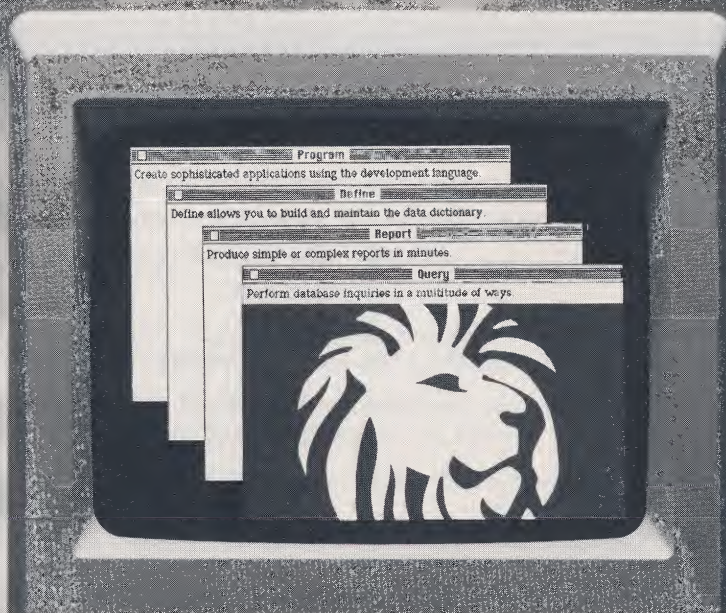
The latest from Haba? "Oh, um, that's been delayed. The new release date is... um... January". But there is one thing the program can do for me right now, until I can afford a nice modem, or until "um... January". Any time I find myself too chipper, or my blood pressure too low, I can fire up my Habadex, and become as frustrated and depressed as I want.

Kurt Wanfried, Carlisle, PA

Hope you didn't faint when you read Kurt Thompson's HabaDialer report in Signal #18. Will you promise to bring us up to date once your dialer arrives? -MG ☐

Received, But Not Yet Reviewed

The Macintosh Buyer's Guide, a semiannual publication listing software, peripherals and add-ons, from Redgate Publishing Co., 3381 Ocean Dr., Vero Beach, FL 32963.



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Should you be unable to locate a dealer selling Mac Lion in your neck of the jungle, please call our toll-free number 1 (800) 252-LION or (714) 634-9012 and we'll supply the information. Or send your check directly to;
COMPUTER SOFTWARE DESIGN INC **CSD**
1904 Wright Circle,
Anaheim, California 92806 and we'll mail your Mac Lion directly.

Moustrak, a pad to provide a work surface for Lisa and Macintosh mice, from Moustrak Inc., 1 Weatherly #503, Mill Valley, CA 94941.

Art Portfolio, MacPaint clip art from Axlon Inc., 1287 Lawrence Station Rd., Sunnyvale, CA 94089.

101 Ways to Use a Macintosh, a book by David D. Thornburg, from Random House Inc., 201 E. 50th St., New York, NY 10022.

HumanForms, MacPaint human body schematics, from The Reference Corp., 212 5th Ave. #1312, New York, NY 10010.

Macintosh Typefaces, a reference manual of shapes, sizes and styles, from Houlberg Development, Box 271075, Escondido, CA 92027.

31 All-Time Favorite Programs for the Macintosh, Microsoft Basic software from Brownbag Software, 8208 N. University, Peoria, IL 61615.

Factfinder, a free-form filing system for the Macintosh, from Forethought Inc., 1973 Landings Dr., Mountain View, CA 94043.

MacPoint, a monthly "pointer publication" to sources of information about the Macintosh, from MacPoint, 5704 Harper #201, Chicago, IL 60637.

Fluent Fonts, eighteen Macintosh fonts in a total of 39 sizes, from Casady Co., Box 223779, Carmel, CA 93922.

ClickArt:Letters, thirteen Macintosh fonts in a total of fifteen sizes, plus seven MacPaint alphabets, from T/Maker Co., 2115 Landings Dr., Mountain View, CA 94043.

The Complete Book of Lisa, a book by Kurt J. Schmucker, from Harper & Row Publishers Inc., 10 E. 53rd St., New York, NY 10022.

Front Desk, Macintosh software for scheduling and resource management, from Layered Inc., 85 Merrimac St., Boston, MA 02114. 

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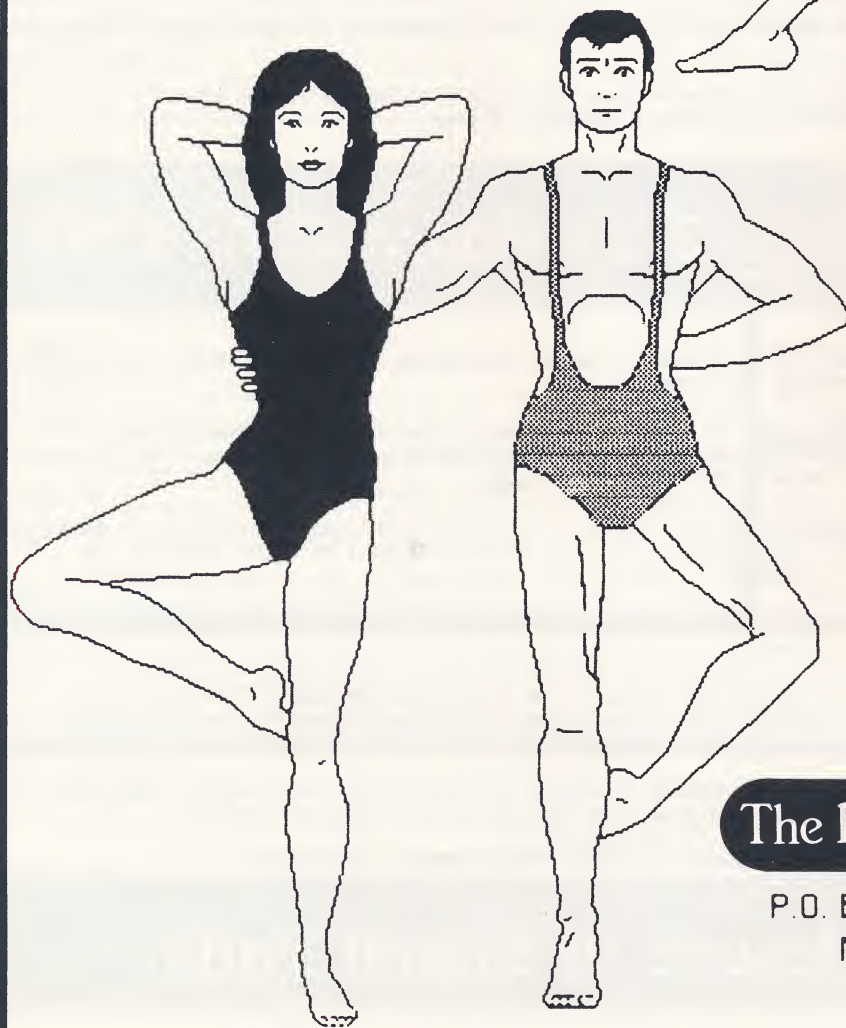
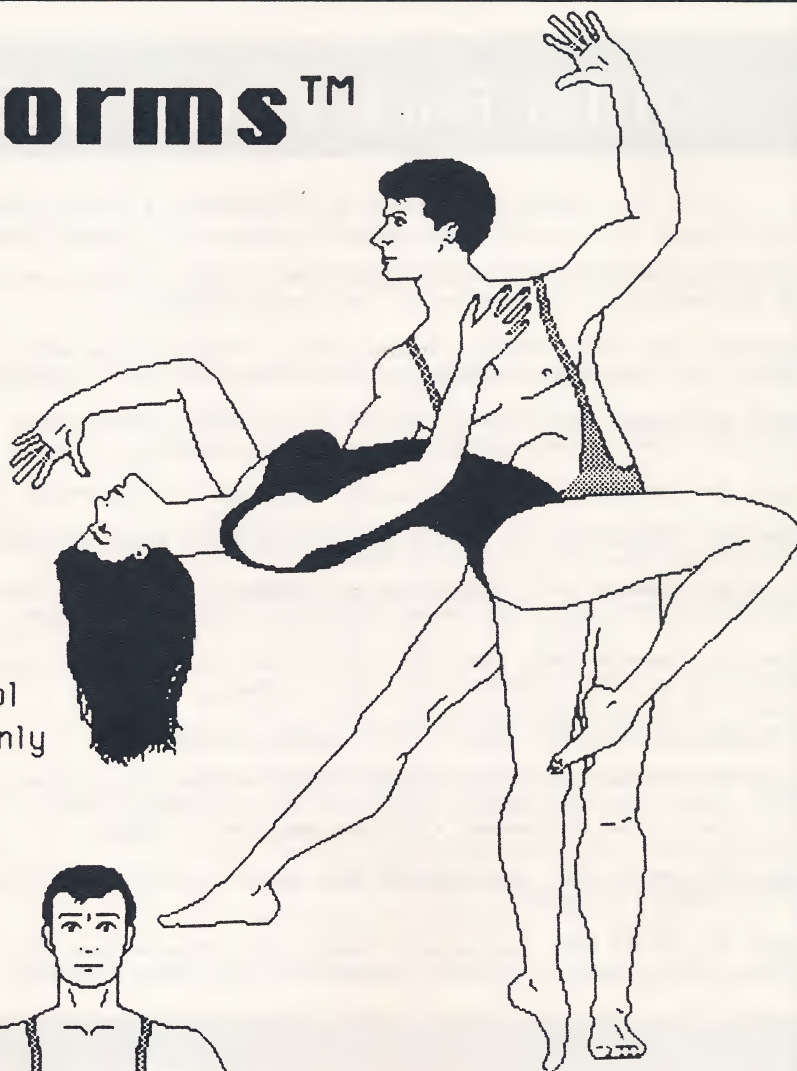
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